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Foreign Affairs

Looking West and East From Como—I

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CADENABBIA, Italy, April 3—Each spring Chancellor Adenauer retreats from the dank Rhine Valley to the north Italian land of lemon trees, and here, in an amiable and surprisingly simple villa high above the Lake of Como, refreshes his energies and regards the world. The primroses are scattered along the hillside leading to his favorite outdoor bowling green and one can almost hear buds bursting in the lull between April gusts that whip the surface of the water down below.

His drawn face slightly tinted by the sun, the old Chancellor takes a deeply philosophic look at the panorama stretching beneath in time and space. On the whole he derives comfort from the scene. He sees a new force on the political horizon, a dynamic Europe drawing together just as, a century earlier, the disparate states of Germany were groping their way toward unified nationhood. And he is not worried about technical arguments as to whether this Europe, now represented by six countries joined in an economic Common Market, will ultimately be bound in federation or confederation. This question, he reckons, will settle itself by stages.

"In our national history we saw during the first half of last century a North German Customs Union and this was followed by an All-German Customs Union which developed into a political structure," he says. "It will be the same in the end with the Europe of the Common Market despite differences that arise."

Dr. Adenauer is not prepared to forecast whether Britain will join this coalition; for London's decision depends on adjusting relations with a far-flung Commonwealth. Likewise he does not foresee a fully organized Atlantic Community—partnership, yes; community, no. That would kill our European idea.

"And we must not yield our objective of an economically and politically strong Western Europe," he believes. "Future historians will see that this organization, founded on the friendship of France and Germany, was the most constructive factor of our epoch."

No Nuclear Arms Wanted

The Chancellor has no dream of making West Germany into a clear-armed power, either French or American help.

"Let me emphasize," he says, "that I don't want such weapons for Germany nor do I think we will ever be in agreement to provide them. When the Western European Union was founded in London I made a declaration renouncing atomic, bacteriological and chemical arms for Germany. I adhere to this today."

But Dr. Adenauer still hopes the plan for a supra-national NATO nuclear force will finally materialize. He himself discussed this with General Norstad and Dirk Stikker, present secretary-general of the Alliance, in Stikker's house on Lake Como in September, 1960. But the change in Administrations in Washington slowed up progress.

Furthermore, he believes General de Gaulle will be less opposed to this once he has settled the Algerian crisis. He says we must recognize that de Gaulle needed to stress French national nuclear capacity to retain the support of the army against the nationalistic appeals of O. A. S. conspirators. "Once Algeria is solved—and, thank God, I think this will be soon—de Gaulle's attitude may change," Adenauer says.

The Chancellor is confident de Gaulle will obtain "overwhelming popular support" in next week's French referendum and that afterward "he may modify his attitude towards NATO." He regards the General as the West's outstanding statesman.

As for the United States — Dr. Adenauer frankly admits his relationships with the Eisenhower administration and especially with Foster Dulles were unusually warm and that "perhaps for a while it was different" with its successor. But now he again feels on intimate terms with Washington — particularly with President Kennedy, Secretaries Rusk and McNamara.

His westward view from Como is therefore on the whole comforting. He sees the evolution of a strong Continental union. Within this grouping West Germany waives any claims as a separate nation to nuclear power. And this new community will retain close trans-Atlantic bonds of partnership.

This is the westward view. To the east the old Chancellor sees clouds for many years ahead; clouds but not warstorms. Dr. Adenauer's eastward view will be subsequently described.